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Letter dated 2 November 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement on Burma/Myanmar issued by the Presidency of the European Union on 30 October 1998 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Ernst **Sucharipa**
Permanent Representative of Austria
to the United Nations

98-33755 (E) 051198 051198

Annex

Statement on Burma/Myanmar issued by the Presidency of the European Union on 30 October 1998

The Council has once again considered the deteriorating internal situation in Burma. It remains deeply concerned at the lack of a positive response from the Burmese authorities to the repeated calls for them to take steps towards the promotion of democracy and human rights, and of national reconciliation. It has accordingly extended and strengthened the European Union Common Position through widening the visa ban by explicitly including transit visas under the current ban and its extension to cover Burmese authorities in the tourism sector, while ensuring that the ban is applied rigorously to all individual members of the State Peace and Development Council and the military, together with their families. It also echoes the view, expressed by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, that, in the present situation, it is inappropriate for tourists to visit Burma.

In these circumstances, although Burma has become a member of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the European Union cannot agree to Burmese accession to the European Community-ASEAN Agreement. However, given the importance of the European Community-ASEAN relationship, it has decided to accept a Burmese presence, under special conditions to be agreed upon, at the next meeting of the Joint Committee under the European Community-ASEAN Agreement. This is without prejudice to Burmese representation at future meetings held under that Agreement, which will need to be decided in the light of the situation in Burma.

The countries of Central and Eastern Europe – Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia – and Cyprus associated with the European Union and the countries of the European Free Trade Association members of the European Economic Area, Iceland and Liechtenstein, align themselves with this statement.